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REPORT (PART II)

ON

NATIVE-OWNED ENGLISH NEWSPAPERS IN BENGAL

FOR THE

Week ending Saturday, 21st September 1901.

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II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

2389. Referring to the result of the Gaya rioting case in the High Court, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* remarks that the Sessions Judge of Gaya unjustly convicted and sentenced to transportation for life 19 persons without ascertaining the exact degree of their offence. But for the High Court, four innocent men would have been transported for life.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
13th Sept. 1901.

2390. In connection with the Samastipur assault case, now pending before the High Court, the same paper complains that Mr. Birley, the Subdivisional Officer, and the Police Inspector were responsible for 11 innocent men being sent up and put to trouble and humiliation, because Mr. Edwards did not know the names of his assailants.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
13th Sept. 1901.

The trying Magistrate is also accused of being prejudiced towards the accused.

2391. The *Bengalee* draws the early attention of Government to the alleged high-handedness of the Subdivisional Officer of Magura, and expresses the hope that the Magura people will be relieved of his regime.

BENGALIEE,
13th Sept. 1901.

In a recent case under section 145, Indian Penal Code, in which the Dighapatia Raj and Babu Asutosh Goswami, of Serampore, were the parties, the Magistrate showed a decided bias against the defendants and hampered their defence in many ways. He cut down what should have been an elaborate enquiry, peremptorily ordered the defendant's naib, who was instructing the pleaders for the defence, to sit aloof or leave the Court, and requested the defence to reduce their list of witnesses, threatening in case of refusal to do it himself. This being opposed to the provisions of the law, the officer has proved himself unfit to administer the law.

2392. The *Bengalee* appeals to Sir John Woodburn to look into the case of Babu Mashahar Singh of Siliguri, who with everybody directly or indirectly connected with him, is being oppressed and harassed by the Subdivisional Magistrate.

BENGALIEE,
13th Sept. 1901.

Already more than half-a-dozen of his men have been arrested on different charges, and are all but one rotting in *hajat*.

One of these, Jagheswar Singh, seems to be specially in the bad graces of the authorities. He has ordinarily to cook for all the prisoners, and once in an altercation with the Magistrate was shoe-beaten and kept handcuffed for three nights. Mashahar Singh's wife has now been arrested on a charge of abduction and confinement, and the circumstances connected with this arrest suggest the idea that it was actuated by the Magistrate's ill-will towards her husband. Additional colour is lent to this view by the fact that the Magistrate was leaving the town without notice on the very date fixed for the hearing of the case.

2393. The *East* complains that Mr. Harward, the Sessions Judge of Dacca, has of late become very irregular in his attendance in Court, with the result that numerous cases are adjourned from day to day, and jurors and witnesses are subjected to great inconvenience and distress.

EAST,
14th Sept. 1901.

In some sessions cases the Judge disagreed with the unanimous verdict of not guilty returned by the jury, and expressed his intention of referring the matter to the High Court, but nothing has yet been done, and the unfortunate prisoners are rotting in jail over three months now.

In many criminal appeals heard in March or April last, judgment still remains undelivered, although some of the prisoners have been liberated after serving their full term in jail.

2394. The *Hindoo Patriot* is of opinion that a change in the constitution of the Calcutta Small Cause Court is necessary for public convenience and the speedy dispensation of justice, as also to relieve the block in the High Court business. An increase

HINDOO PATRIOT,
14th Sept. 1901.

in the territorial jurisdiction of the Small Cause Court, as well as the trial by it of all suits up to the value of Rs. 5,000, will bring about the desired end. It is also suggested that the Small Cause Court should be converted into a court of record.

The Judges, who are thoroughly capable men, may be safely vested with the increased power and no large addition to their numerical strength will be needed. Appeals from their decisions should be allowed, and heard in the Appellate side of the High Court.

The transfer of insolvency cases will also relieve the pressure of work in the High Court.

These measures will result in a great saving of time and money to the public.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
16th Sept. 1901.

2395. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* is aware of the severity with which

Severe treatment of natives.

Indians are treated if they intrude into a railway carriage specially reserved for Europeans, but relates that, at Purulia, a man was criminally prosecuted and fined for having, through ignorance, used a bathing ghat set apart for Europeans. A local pleader felt the absurdity of the proceedings so keenly that he paid the fine from his own pocket.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
16th Sept. 1901.

2396. The punishment of the accused in the Patna riot case will, says

The Patna riot case.

the same paper, have rather a disastrous than a wholesome effect upon the people, for there are grave doubts as to whether there was any riot at all. Punishment was awarded upon purely police evidence which in such cases is not absolutely reliable, the police being the complainants. The people came in procession to amuse themselves, or perform a religious duty, and found themselves in jail on account of the folly of the Government in sending a European lad to perform an act which requires tact, experience and wisdom.

The *Muharram* is a Muhammadan festival, but mostly Hindus have been punished.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
17th Sept. 1901.

2397. The same journal condemns the system of administering criminal

Criminal administration in India
and in England.

justice in India, as it is not humane and does not agree with what obtains in England. The universal and bitter cry in India is to save the people from the vagaries and cruelties of criminal justice. A feeling of horror has been evoked in the native mind, and the Indian subject of the King has no love for the police, or the Magistracy, nor for the laws enacted for their protection.

INDIAN EMPIRE,
17th Sept. 1901.

2398. The *Indian Empire* complains of Indians being excluded from

One of the causes which create
and intensify race feeling.

partaking in the good treatment accorded by the judiciary in their dealings with Europeans. Even in a non-bailable offence case, bail is secured to him on the extraordinary ground that jails have no accommodation for European undertrial prisoners.

It is surprising, says the *Empire*, that this tendency should be directed to the servants of Europeans as well. In a charge of theft brought against the syce of a Captain Powell at Silchar, Assam, the latter would not allow his servant to be arrested and the Extra Assistant Commissioner instead of ordering a warrant for the culprit's arrest, simply wrote to the Captain to produce the man when required.

The accused was fined Rs. 15 only.

(d)—Education.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
13th Sept. 1901.

2399. Commenting on the purely official constitution of the Educational

The Educational Conference.

Conference, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* asserts that the people should be freely taken into confidence, as they are vitally interested in the subject under consideration, and might offer suggestions that would be of value. The newspapers are silent in

this respect owing to ignorance of the Government's intentions. If cramming is to be avoided, the function of universities should be only to impart sound education. The obtaining of degrees should be made as easy as possible, and Government should choose its own way of selecting men when needed.

2400. The decadence of the *Bhadralok* classes, says the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, is due to the system of education prevailing in India, and the Educational Conference should bear this fact in mind. To pass an examination the student is burdened with too many subjects and too many books on each subject. This coupled with the fact that these works are all written in a foreign language, forms a task which is certain to break down even the most robust student. The required percentage of attendance in college lectures is also an unnecessary restriction upon the healthy exercise of mind and body.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
17th Sept. 1901.

2401. The *Indian Mirror* agrees with Lord Curzon that no system of education can be really effective unless it rests upon a religious foundation, and suggests the introduction in schools of such Hindu religious books as the "Bhagavat Gita," "Upanishads," etc., for their contents will not offend the religious susceptibilities of any particular denomination. Should, however, there be any objection to them, it is suggested that the sublime teachings of all religions, without the least taint of sectarianism, may be compiled under the supervision of a Committee composed of representatives of different religious denominations, and introduced into Indian schools and colleges.

INDIAN MIRROR,
14th Sept. 1901.

The *Mirror* is glad that Bishop Welldon's ambitious and visionary project of introducing the Bible into Government educational institutions has fallen through, for the British Government owes all its strength and success to their wise policy of non-intervention in regard to religious faiths, a blessing which the Indian people vastly appreciate.

Teachers can do more than books as regards moral training, but morality divorced from religion has no substantial basis. The education of the Hindu youth must be spiritual.

2402. A correspondent of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* enquires why drill has been made by the Calcutta University authorities a compulsory part of school work. The manner in which boys are tortured in the name of drill is deplorable, for after six hours' school-work on one meal in 12 hours, such hard exercise is fatal to health.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
16th Sept. 1901.

It is suggested that some lighter form of exercise be substituted for the present "neck-break outlandish affair," and that only in such schools where the majority of boys can afford substantial food. The drill should be immediately after tiffin hours, and those who have not had food should be exempted.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

2403. The *Behar Herald* draws attention to the state of the Jamalpur Municipality in consequence of Ward Commissioners and rate-payers having no control or voice in the improvements of the wards and bustees. The Chairman lives mostly at Howrah, and the Vice-Chairman has plenty of official work to do.

BEHAR HERALD,
14th Sept. 1901.

Money is being wasted over improvements and embellishments in the European quarter, but the native quarter is quite neglected and filthy, the drains being choked with rank vegetation.

2404. Referring to a rumour afloat that the Divisional Commissioner is desirous of putting an end to Local Self-Government in Hooghly, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* expresses a hope that Mr. Inglis, the District Magistrate, who is a friend of the natives, will persuade Mr. Carstairs to allow an Indian Chairman to be elected this time. The Commissioners are advised to elect an experienced Chairman who will put the municipality in order.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
16th Sept. 1901.

(g)—*Railways and Communications, including Canals and Irrigation.*BENGALÉE,
14th Sept. 1901.

2405. The *Bengalée* again complains of the grave scandal caused by the distinction made in the treatment of third and higher class passengers on railways, and appeals to Lord Curzon to take up the matter. Third class passengers, though they contribute the bulk of the earnings derived from passenger traffic, are treated too often like dumb driven cattle, the railway underlings behaving with positive discourtesy and insult.

An instance of this has been furnished by a gentleman who visited Howrah station on the 6th instant at the time of the departure of the loop mail. Third class ticket-holders were insulted by a Eurasian ticket-collector, who abused and handled some of them very roughly.

This comes of employing uneducated and ill-bred persons who have no sense of their responsibilities or the duty they owe to passengers.

It is only on the Eastern Bengal State Railway that there are Indian and some Eurasian ticket-collectors who are apparently selected with care.

BENGALÉE,
18th Sept. 1901.

2406. The *Bengalée* is grateful to Mr. Holmes, the District Traffic Superintendent on the Eastern Bengal State Railway, for the speedy and fitting steps he has taken to punish the Eurasian Ticket Collectors who grossly insulted a Eurasian Lady passenger at Baliaghata. Their misconduct might be traced to the appointment of boys who have not yet reached the age of discretion, and to the want of supervision exercised by the Head Ticket Collector of Baliaghata, who is an old and physically infirm man, possessing the use of only one leg.

(h)—*General.*BENGALÉE,
14th Sept. 1901.

2407. In the opinion of the *Bengalée*, a barrier seems to have arisen latterly which has arrested the progress of Bengal Civilians beyond a Membership of the Board of Revenue or a Judgeship of the High Court. The chance of Mr. Cotton surmounting this barrier seems now very improbable, although he is the one officer ideally fit for the *musnud* of Belvedere. The system of boy cotting by which Bengal is condemned to be ruled by men without local knowledge and experience is very unsatisfactory, and if such requisites are not considered indispensable in a Provincial ruler, it would be far better to import first class men from England—men with free and unbiased minds, and with correct and up-to-date ideas to administer the provinces.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
18th Sept. 1901.

2408. With regard to certain remarks of the Government of India suggesting that some sort of connection existed between Mr. Pennell and the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, that journal in defence of the accused officer emphatically denies the imputation. A copy of the Noakhali judgment was officially asked for and granted by Mr. Pennell, only after it had been delivered in Court. Mr. Pennell was very much annoyed at seeing instalments in the *Patrika* before he had permitted a copy to be furnished, and suspended one of his clerks for it.

Its publication before being delivered at the High Court was due to the fact that he brought it himself to Calcutta.

BENGALÉE,
18th Sept. 1901.

2409. Commenting on the Bengal Government's lengthy letter to the Government of India on the Noakhali case, the *Bengalée* expresses admiration at the discreet silence of the latter on some of the most startling and material facts which were brought to light by Mr. Pennell. Indians in Government employ are dismissed for offences which dwindle to nothing when compared to the offence committed by Messrs. Corbett and Bradley, yet in spite of the strictures passed by the Government of India and the opinion of the Governor-General as to the inadequacy of the punishment, these officers were retained in the service and given promotions.

"Is it to be wondered at that people are not satisfied with the police, and with the union of executive and judicial functions?"

The judgment of Justices Amir Ali and Pratt, which has been made so much of in the Government letter, is erroneous, anomalous and illogical as shown by Mr. Geidt's judgment in which the finding of facts is the same as in

Mr. Pennell's judgment. Mr. Geidt's judgment has been upheld by the High Court.

As regards the recommendation for Mr. Pennell's dismissal, the Indian section of the community deeply regret that one so able, so fearless, so keenly animated by an unconquerable love of justice should be dismissed from a high position, where it would have been in his power to have done them much good.

III.—LEGISLATION.

2410. Referring to a case under the Age of Consent Act which has taken place at Barisal, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* says that since the passing of the Act not more than a dozen or so cases have taken place among a population of 30 crores, a fact which proves the non-existence of the evil and the inutility of the Act. India is a land of experiment where legislators try their hand at legislation.

The Age of Consent Act.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
16th Sept. 1901.

IV.—NATIVE STATES.

2411. Reverting to the expulsion of Mr. Roy from Tippera, the *Hindoo Patriot* styles the incident a storm in a teapot, and justifies the action of the Political Agent in refusing to hold a public enquiry in the presence of Mr. Roy. If the latter had entered the independent territory again, he would have been re-expelled by the Maharajah, and the Government cannot possibly humiliate a Sovereign Prince or alienate the feelings of one of its most trusted and faithful allies for the sake of a junior Barrister, particularly when justice is not on his side.

The Tippera expulsion case.

HINDOO PATRIOT,
17th Sept. 1901.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

2412. The Arrah correspondent of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* reports harrowing tales of distress from villagers who have been suffering from the havoc caused by the Sone flood. Very many have lost their *bhados* crops as well as their dwelling-houses with all their contents. Some villages were swept clean of all houses, while in others 50 to 75 per cent. have been washed away. Destitute people are seen in the town begging for help. A local relief fund has been opened, but will be quite inadequate and of no material good, unless sufficient help comes from the Government and other places.

Effects of the Sone flood.

AMRITA BAZAR
PATRIKA,
17th Sept. 1901.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

2413. Commenting on Lord George Hamilton's hostile attitude towards the Congress, the *Bengalee* contrasts it with the official recognition of a Governor-General of India, that the Congress was a perfectly legitimate movement.

The Congress and Lord George Hamilton.

BENGALIEE,
13th Sept. 1901.

The Secretary of State's condemnation of the Congress in his Budget speech was as one-sided as it was unworthy of the highest Indian official, who ought never to utter a word without a full sense of his responsibility. There is no truth in the statement that supporters of the movement are closely identified with the Indian money-lending class in particular, as it is a Congress of all India and includes the borrowing classes. It is the progress made towards this high ideal that is resented by Lord George Hamilton and officials of his type, for the Congress has taught the country to think that the bureaucratic regime which has been established in India is not the most perfect, and that our officials are not infallible.

2414. There are indications on all sides, says the *Bengalee*, that Muhammadans are making a distinct approach towards the Congress movement. This change in their attitude has created quite a ferment at Aligarh which place has hitherto been the centre and focus of the public opinion of the Muhammadan community of Upper India. The death of Sir Sayyid Ahmad and

The Muhammadans and the Congress.

BENGALIEE,
17th Sept. 1901.

Mr. Theodore Beck has removed the two men who ably guided and controlled the public mind of the Muhammadans, and Mr. Theodore Morrison rushes to the arena as the champion of what seems a losing cause.

In a letter to the *Pioneer* the latter recognizes the existence of unrest among the Muhammadan community of India which must find an outlet in the formation of a separate political organization, or in association with the Congress movement. The first proposal is regarded by him as out of the question and the second does not meet his approval.

BENGALIE,
13th Sept. 1901.

2415. The attack now being made by the planters of Assam upon the much-abused Chief Commissioner is likened by the *Bengalee* to that made 41 years ago by the indigo-planters of Bengal, upon Sir John Peter Grant, the then Lieutenant-Governor. The two cases are parallel, for the latter, like Mr. Cotton, felt it his duty to protect the cultivators from the oppressions practised upon them by the planters, with the result that the latter memorialized the Governor-General in Council, alleging that the Lieutenant Governor had since his appointment acted in such a way as to throw nearly the whole of the indigo districts, and specially Krishnagar, into confusion, and that the indigo-planters would be irretrievably ruined if nothing was done to remedy the system of misrule.

The charges against Mr. Cotton are but mere echoes of those brought against Sir John Peter Grant. The latter disproved them all, and the Government of India upheld his action which was "marked by a sound, temperate and impartial judgment."

It is hoped that Lord Curzon will, like his illustrious predecessor, uphold the policy of righteousness so steadfastly pursued by Mr. Cotton in the face of such serious opposition, which presents a queer object-lesson in loyalty to the educated section of the Indian people.

INDIAN NATION,
16th Sept. 1901.

2416. Commenting on the behaviour of the planters of Assam towards their Chief Commissioner, the *Indian Nation* pronounces the tone of the resolutions passed at their meeting to be not merely disrespectful, but insolent and seditious. In substance they are a gross libel on the head of the local administration, and the language used is most vile and scurrilous, and calculated to bring the Government into contempt. If the proceedings are passed unnoticed by the Government of India and the Secretary of State, the conviction will gain ground that there are separate laws for white and black, and that Englishmen may say or do anything they please and terrorise the Government with impunity.

2417. The *Bengalee* advocates the formation of another International Exhibition in Calcutta so that all the latest discoveries of human ingenuity and developments of human enterprise may be focussed into one centre to enlighten and instruct the stay-at-home Indian people. In Europe and America the progress has been phenomenal in all departments of industrial and commercial life; and the latest appliances of science and art have been wonderfully improved.

BENGALIE,
14th Sept. 1901.

Desirability of an International Exhibition.

2418. The same paper quotes a passage from Mr. J. M. Maclean's (late M. P. for Cardiff) "Personal reminiscences of life in the House of Commons" in which that gentleman testifies that India "was never more profoundly disaffected to British rule than at present, and never governed with less regard for the interests and wishes of the subject races; and that it is only the hopelessness of resistance which prevents the outbreak of formidable popular insurrections."

BENGALIE,
14th Sept. 1901.

Macleanian meditation.

The second of these complaints is endorsed by the *Bengalee* because now-a-days native opinion is regarded as the least important factor in shaping the policy of Government.

According to Mr. Maclean this is due to Parliamentary apathy, but in the opinion of the *Bengalee* the rulers are jealous of the growing power and influence of the native and naturally seek every opportunity of putting him down. Parliamentary interference occasionally proves a boon of doubtful value, as shown in the case of the cotton duties; and as a check upon the "despotism" of the Government in this country or the India Office, it is often illusory.

2419. Writing on the contemplated suppression of anarchism, the *Hindoo Patriot* suggests that the Governments of the countries where such dreadful lawlessness exists should appeal to the people to co-operate with them in putting down this monstrous crime, and Vigilance Committees should be formed to watch the movements of criminals and their associates. All civilized countries should be made free of Nihilism, Socialism and Anarchism.

HINDOO PATRIOT,
17th Sept. 1901.

OFFICE OF THE INSPR.-GENERAL
OF POLICE, L. P.,
WRITERS' BUILDINGS,
The 21st September 1901.

H. B. ST. LEGER,
Asst. to Insp.-General of Police, L. P.

